

**Meeting Minutes: Central/Buchmiller/Sunnyside Parks
 Master Plans
 Public Meeting #3**

Date: November 10, 2008
Time: 7:00 pm
Location: Environmental Center - Central Park
By: Chuck Strodoski
Project No.: 06LAN-01

Persons Attending: James Hackett, Director, Lancaster County Parks and Recreation
 Dave Martin, West Lampeter Township
 Tim Draude, Muhlenberg Botanical Society
 Sam Stoltzfus, Neighbor
 Elaine Stoltzfus, Neighbor
 Gene Homan, Neighbor
 Kay Byrnes, Park user
 William Byrnes, Park User
 Lori Gochnouer, Neighbor
 M Draude, Park user
 R. Drennen, Park User
 Lisa Wright, Resident
 Stephanie Riekers, VP Rockford Board of Trustees
 Mary Ann Schlil, Park user
 Wilson Brown, Park User
 Christine Brubaker, LIMC Vice Chair
 Bess Mann, Resident
 Chuck Strodoski, YSM
 Ann Yost, YSM

Purpose of the Meeting: To present the Final Master Plans for Central and Buchmiller Parks to the public.

Of Record:

1. J. Hackett opened the meeting by welcoming everyone, briefly describing the project and introducing the consultants.
2. A. Yost gave a brief introduction to the parks and the project goals were outlined:
 - Protect, enhance, and preserve Central and Buchmiller Parks natural resources and cultural heritage.
 - Promote environmental education for Lancaster County residents of all ages and abilities.

- Provide well maintained facilities and special use areas to create safe, convenient, enjoyable environments for leisure pursuits.
3. A. Yost presented an overview of the work completed to date and the master planning process:
- Goal setting
 - Site analysis
 - Needs assessment and research
 - Conceptual alternative designs
 - Pre-final design
 - Final design
 - Cost analysis
 - Operations and maintenance analysis
4. C. Strodoski presented the vision statements for Central and Buchmiller Parks followed by a summary of the park planning objectives. The vision and objectives for each park are outlined below:

Central Park

- **Vision** - Lancaster County Central Park is a natural oasis for outdoor leisure pursuits. Its diverse natural and recreation features create a unique destination that draws visitors to enjoy family orientated facilities and special events, environmental education programs, and scenic beauty.
- **Objectives**
 - Conserve and enhance natural resources, especially the riparian buffer.
 - Promote opportunities for passive recreation and environmental education
 - Provide complementary facilities to augment existing park features
 - Improve visitor safety and accessibility
 - Enhance the park character through naturalized landscape
 - Improve trails to create a walking, biking, and fitness destination
 - Connect to regional trails and greenways
 - Concentrate active park facilities in “hub” areas.

Buchmiller Park

- **Vision** - Buchmiller Park is a destination for picnicking and informal recreation. Visitors enjoy the quiet setting and easy access to the Conestoga River and Greenway.
- **Objectives**
 - Expand number and variety of picnic opportunities
 - Maintain and enhance well used facilities
 - Provide complementary facilities to augment existing features
 - Enhance the riparian buffer
 - Improve safety and accessibility
 - Minimize disturbance to natural resources
 - Connect to trails and greenways

5. C. Strodoski presented the final master plans for each park. Discussions regarding the master plan reviews included the following:
- Equestrian use of the park was questioned. Designated equestrian trails are illustrated on the master plan stretching from the meadow area north of the maintenance facility to the exhibit farm area. A separate equestrian tread would be developed for this designated trail. Equestrian use of the trail along the Conestoga River was questioned. Although not designated as an equestrian trail, the park policy may include provisions for equestrian use throughout the park.
 - The parks dog policy was questioned. C. Strodoski noted the master plan considered the development of an off leash dog area, however, the final master plan does not provide an off leash area. The park is considered a “dog friendly” park. Concern was raised regarding the off leash dogs in the park. A frequent park user expressed concern that dogs off leash pose a safety concern to park users. Another park user does walk his dog in the park off leash and the dog is under his control. A. Yost suggested an area within the park, such as the landfill area, be dedicated as an off-leash area. J. Hackett noted that the parks department does monitor the incident reports. Historically, few incidents are reported each year regarding off leash dogs.
 - The current park policy requires pet owners to clean up after their pets. This policy should be posted to make pet owners aware.
 - Designated creek/river access is desired. The master plan does include provisions for stabilized creek access in numerous locations. Access for equestrians was also requested.
 - A suggestion was made for a canoe/bicycle loop between Central and Buchmiller Park, where a user could store a bike at one end and canoe/kayak between a parking area and a bike storage area, for convenient shuttling. The master plan does provide for such a scenario, including multiple creek/river access areas and trails, connecting the two parks.
 - The proposed tunnel beneath Willow Street Pike was discussed. Willow Street Pike is a heavily traveled road. The underground crossing would separate the vehicle from the pedestrian/bicycle traffic. The tunnel must be properly designed to be open and visible and with proper lighting to reduce safety concerns.
 - The master plan does provide for the potential realignment of Eshelman Mill Road and bridge to reconfigure the harsh turns. No plans are available for the road realignment, however, the master plan shows its potential impact on the park property.
 - The special event area was questioned. What types of special events are planned? The special events area shown on the master plan will replace the open lawn at the environmental center. The area is envisioned as an open lawn with a pavilion at one end to serve as a stage or event area. This area will serve the existing county park events and be flexible to accommodate potentially new gatherings. J. Hackett indicated that the Parks Department intends to continue with the same type of special events that have traditionally been held in the park.
 - What impact will the Rockford Road closure have on traffic in the park. In particular, the intersection of General Hand Drive and Golf Road. Prior to construction, the road closure should be studied by a traffic engineer. Initially, it is believed the closure will reduce traffic in the park, eliminating the convenient cut-thru. The concept was favorably supported by the City Police representative on the project study committee.

- The park master plan should reference the Lancaster County Green Infrastructure Plan, currently in draft form. That plan should be referenced to provide continuity between the two plans.
 - The replacement of the tennis courts for basketball courts at Buchmiller Park was questioned. Buchmiller Park was viewed as the more active park. Tennis at Buchmiller Park has decreased, based on new tennis courts developed in the area and schools using courts elsewhere.
 - The time line for project completion was questioned. The master plan does not set a timeline for completion. The goals outlined in the plan are prioritized so they can be implemented sequentially, as funding becomes available.
 - The river and creek were noted as the parks greatest assets. Currently, views and access to the creek are blocked by the existing streambank vegetation. The plan suggests the removal on non-native, invasive streambank vegetation and replacement with native species to buffer the waterway and stabilize the banks. The vegetation should be selected to achieve the goals without impacting the visual access to the water.
6. A. Yost summarized the main goals of the Strategic Action Plan set forth in the report. The strategic action plan is divided into three separate categories.
- Master Plan Implementation Strategies
 - Complete improvements that enhance visitor safety, security, and accessibility.
 - Complete improvements that minimize maintenance tasks and costs.
 - Complete improvements that enhance revenues within the parks.
 - Land and Resource Implementation Strategies
 - Practice sustainable forest management.
 - Invasive species control.
 - Undertake reforestation initiatives and natural area plantings.
 - Operations, Management, and Financing Strategies
 - Create a Lancaster County Park & Recreation Advisory Board.
 - Expand the volunteer program.
7. A. Yost concluded the meeting by stating that the meeting was the final public meeting to present the master plan. The plan will be presented to the Lancaster County Commissioners at their regularly scheduled meeting next week for adoption.

Provide changes or corrections to these meeting minutes to C. Strodoski (chucks@ysmla.com) at YSM within one week of receipt.